

SONNETS
AND OTHER POEMS

HENRY AYLETT SAMPSON

WITH A FOREWORD BY
JOHN CALVIN METCALF



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S O N N E T S

HENRY AYLETT SAMPSON

SONNETS
AND OTHER POEMS

BY
HENRY AYLETT SAMPSON

WITH INTRODUCTION BY
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FOREWORD

HENRY AYLETT SAMPSON belonged to that class of literary spirits who are so concerned with the joy of creation as to be quite indifferent to the rewards of publication. The inward sense of life and expression was enough. He was careless of fame. So it happened that only a few of his poems got into print during his lifetime. This verse was "fugitive" only in the sense that its author, modestly fleeing from publicity, had been caught, as it were, by a discriminating editor and finally persuaded to appear with some regularity in the columns of the Richmond *Evening Journal*. Thence discovered by a national anthologist, the poet found himself in the company of his peers: several of his sonnets were reprinted in the Boston *Transcript* and in Braithwaite's *Anthology of Magazine Verse for 1918*. Those who read the published sonnets at once recognized the accent of a real poet. Now that his work is done, the natural impulse is to collect into a volume such of his verse, published and unpublished, as those who knew him intimately think he might have chosen to preserve. This they would do both for the sake of his own fame and for the delight of a larger number of readers than that relatively small circle who already know his great merits.

FOREWORD

With Henry Aylett Sampson literature was a passion, not a profession. His life of fifty years, spent partly in the West and partly in the East, but mostly in Virginia, to which he was traditionally rooted, was largely devoted to business. But he was a lifelong lover of books and for thirty years a writer of verse. He knew the best that had been thought and said in the world, and from such a background of culture his own writing was enriched. Lured by old, forgotten, far-off things and familiarly versed in legendary lore, he had a fancy for rare volumes and the flavor of antique phrasing. Old bookshops and their leisurely keepers attracted him, and he would find surcease from business preoccupations in these retreats. If perchance he found a favorite author in artistic covers, he was as happy as Charles Lamb over the capture of an Elizabethan folio. But his love for the old was hardly greater than his interest in the new. Although himself a conservative in the use of verse-forms, he was an open-minded, if somewhat amused, reader and critic of the amorphous vagaries of the free-verse folk. He was no formalist, however; to him it was the imagery, the magic word or phrase, the tone-coloring, rather than the mold, that made poetry. For these Keats-like qualities his instinct was sure; they are the qualities, indeed, that give distinction of tone to much of his own verse.

FOREWORD

The sonnet is the form in which Henry Aylett Sampson attained his highest poetic excellence. By long years of practice he achieved a mastery of this most exacting kind of lyric. "It takes a great deal of life to make a little art," said Alfred de Musset. No one knew the truth of that better than this Virginia poet. To your true poet the fairy gift of song is vouchsafed by the gods on one condition, that he requite the deathless favor by tireless devotion to his art. Henry Aylett Sampson left some two-score sonnets, the fruitage of thirty years. If read in the order of their composition, they will show a notable growth of mind and art; the early grace is in the later ones, but the blossom has changed into mellow fruitfulness; the years have wrought a finer fabric and a chastening of spirit. The youthful sonnets show the poet as a careful student of technique, endowed with a rare sensitiveness to beauty and an unusual facility in the combination of pleasing sounds; but the years brought freedom of movement, sureness of touch, and a finer harmony of thought and emotion. In such sonnets as "On an Old Hymn-Book" and "To a Genial Old Man" subtlety and delicacy of sentiment are perfectly blended, while in "Stephen Phillips Bankrupt" and "An Obbligato," for instance, there is a happy union of intellectual suggestion and solemn tenderness. And one would read a long time in sonnet-collections of these modern days before coming upon so musical and

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haunting a bit of fancy as "Prologue to a Book of Verse."

In other kinds of verse less formal and less serious than the sonnet, Henry Aylett Sampson was equally successful. Light, graceful lyric forms—the *vers de société* of the old French singers, perfected in English by Austin Dobson, Andrew Lang, and others—strongly appealed to the Virginia poet; in his youth he tried his hand at the ballade, the rondeau, the villanelle, and the triolet. Later in life he found a more enduring satisfaction in less exotic types, but in the familiar personal lyric his fancy was always happily at home. Lover of books, he was no less a lover of men, a very human, winsome soul. He had a poet's swift and sure intuition of spiritual values in an individual, and having once appraised him to his liking, he took their possessor to his heart. Many of his familiar lyrics record his friendship in a spirit of charming badinage, poems almost too intimately personal for inclusion in this volume; but some of them are so radiantly Sampsonian that they may not be omitted from a collection which would give the reader an idea of the poet's own personality.

It is difficult, indeed, to be coldly judicial in the evaluation of verse that comes so near the heart, evoked, as much of it was, by some apparently trivial action clashing dramatically with an individual trait known to only a few congenial

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spirits. Of such stuff Henry Aylett Sampson made a score or more of little lyrical ballads, some touched with subdued comic humor, others voicing a recurrent note of gentle pathos, a few sounding an undertone of wistful sadness, the sense of tears in mortal things usually allied with the gift of poetic sensibility. In none of these personal poems is the artistry more delicate or the sentiment finer than in the group called "Ju-Ju Verses," in which the poet whimsically and playfully interprets the mind of childhood with his eye on his own child. Here more than elsewhere his fancy has an elfin touch, but the general tone is the good old human one of hearth and home. His excursions into Romanceland began and ended in his own domestic "enchanted island." For this Prospero, also, his "library was dukedom large enough"; and for this singer of old Ulysses, "always roaming with a hungry heart," there was gladness in the light of familiar faces. Lover of men and women and children, lyric humanist, gentle satirist, touching the minor chords of the harp of life into a music which those of us who knew him well would not willingly let perish—such was Henry Sampson.

In the selection and arrangement of the poems in this volume four persons have had a hand—Mrs. Emma Speed Sampson, Archer G. Jones, Samuel T. Clover, and the writer of this introduc-

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tion. To the last the final editorial supervision was intrusted. The purpose has been to make available to the public such poems of Henry Aylett Sampson as seem most adequately to reflect his interesting personality and most likely to make a permanent appeal to lovers of literature. Thus the little volume should prove at once a tribute to his genius and a fitting memorial to a rarely gifted singer. To one of his friends in particular, Archer G. Jones of Richmond, grateful acknowledgment is due for providing for the publication of this book of poems.

JOHN CALVIN METCALF.

University of Virginia.

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A SONNET CYCLE



A SONNET CYCLE

PROLOGUE TO A BOOK OF VERSE

Oh, you, whose blood glows at the clash of steel,
Seek not to sense it as you turn these leaves,
Nor look for Love triumphant, or that grieves
Deserted, old and maimed on Passion's wheel.
And here no line of statecraft will appeal
To him Ambition's shifting flame deceives;
Here fades the world while Memory retrieves
Dominions moldering 'neath long centuries' seal.
Oh, ask not me what you shall see or hear,
Mayhap, a rose, lone, virginal and white:
A glint of moonlight on a lifting wave:
Faint tones of bells, blown o'er a lilyed mere:
A star, new-born upon the breast of
Night:
Or withered leaves whirled o'er a nameless grave.

A SONNET CYCLE

SONNET TO A SONNET

WHERE lurks the elfin music of thy lines
That sigh like surf upon a summer shore—
Yea, thy light magic sheweth me far more—
I hear the melody of murmuring pines,
Brown sheaves I see, and wealth of tangled vines,
And dark-haired nymphs adrowse, lulled by
the roar
Of some far cataract whose waters pour
Flashing with gems that mock at earthly mines.
Oh, cosmic soul of man that jeers at fate—
Fate that would bind him to this iron age—
A word, a note, a vista, lo! there springs
Undying still the memory of the great
Primeval world, his vanished heritage,
While with the morning stars his spirit sings.

A SONNET CYCLE

TO ROSALIE AYLETT SAMPSON

I **MAY** not break thy sleep, so let me kneel
Softly beside thee, dreaming that thine eyes
Look into mine, where wistful tear-drops rise:
Dream thy dear hand in wintry locks doth steal:
Dream thy loved voice can once again reveal
The love poor youth had not the wit to prize:
Dream one last kiss upon my lips light lies,
Then can the Angel Death mine own congeal.
Thou art in paradise, and God's great peace,
That passeth understanding, laps thee round;
But, mother mine, remember me I say
In that lone hour that marks my soul's release,
And clasp me like an infant, lost and found,
And, as of old, teach me again to pray.

A SONNET CYCLE

AN ANNIVERSARY

I WAS a child and when they came to me
And told me, brokenly, that you were dead
I could not sense it. How, when overhead,
The sun shone on and in a budding tree
Home-coming birds their ecstasies set free?
I had not seen the angel, marked his tread;
That night you'd hear my prayer, tuck me in
bed;
You would return and my vague sorrow flee.
• • • • •
You did return, for in brooks' singing flow
I catch your laugh, and often in the leaves
I hear you whisper, or some joyous rose
Sways at your passing, as unseen you go,
Smiling, because my heart no longer grieves
Since I have learned what God would have us
know.

A SONNET CYCLE

IN MEMORIAM

LET us not mourn for those who left us here,
Whose feet press meadows of undying green,
Whose eyes are radiant with a joy serene,
Who may not know our sorrows, lest a tear
Defeat God's plans that shall at last be clear.
Oh, let us dream that over us, unseen,
They hover lightly with triumphant mien
In perfect love that casteth out all fear.
They were as little children that lay down
At day's decline to yield themselves to
sleep,
And as they dreamed came One with silence shod
And they forgot the world's caress or frown—
Oh, blessed sowers who need never reap—
And waked, strained to the yearning breast of God.

A SONNET CYCLE

AN OBBLIGATO: TO MARGARET PRATT

ABOVE bowed heads of worshipers in prayer
The priest's voice floats, besieging heaven's throne,
Pleading Christ's name and depth of love unknown.
Here once you sat and over your dark hair
The sunlight lingered, limned a halo there.
Ah, then it seemed, upon a light wind blown,
Came music, delicate and dim, alone,
Hymned by the angels in a breathless air.
The priest prays on, but you, *you* come no more,
You come no more, the sunbeams play in vain,
For your light step has passed beyond our sun
To greater suns, and radiant on that shore
Have faded utterly your thoughts of pain
While in your eyes the joy of life begun.

A SONNET CYCLE

IN MEMORIAM: TO HELEN MONTAGUE

THE blue wistaria hovers 'round her door
To whisper soft the message of the spring
And seems to sigh, "Where is she wandering
While April skies the new-born earth bend o'er
With dewy eyes, e'en as young mothers pore
On dreamy babes, lulled by the murmuring
Of circling angels on unwearied wing?"
Ah, droop sweet blooms! she will return no more.
No more, no more: fall petals like quick tears!
Rain perfumed sorrow where her shadow
passed!

Ye may not rise where her pure spirit rose,
Where spring undying smiles through endless
years—
Peace, peace, we know in all God's
garden, vast,
No saintlier soul, no lovelier flower blows.

A SONNET CYCLE

STEPHEN PHILLIPS, BANKRUPT

How shall men call you "bankrupt," you who hold
The treasure of a deathless line of kings,
Who, musing 'midst the surge of awful wings,
With lifted eyes, unwearyed, calm and bold
Can span the infinite and see unfold
The shrinking beauty of all hallowed things,
While sun to sun in joy eternal sings
And far-flung stars burn through a rain of gold?
Life, Love and Death are yours to understand;
The cry of winds and laughter of the sea,
The lore of days to come and days long dead,
All, all is yours; and if with empty hand
Men pass you by, still shall your soul
be free
E'en though your body, fettered, lacks for bread.

A SONNET CYCLE

AFTER READING AN ANTHOLOGY OF FUGITIVE VERSE

THESE have survived the seas' vicissitudes
And lie at rest within this quiet bay.
No more of shifting tides and fickle winds in
play—

These Tyrian galleys know soft interludes,
When o'er their cargo some old lover broods
And sees again a verse that slipped away,
Or hears a mocking bird in moonlit May
Make vocal Nature's holiest haunting moods.
Dream ships, we never thought to look on more,
Saint Anthony has tipped your spars with fire
And salved you from the menace of the night.
Rest, fairy craft, rest on a fairy shore!
Faint bells ring welcome from a viewless spire,
While in the dusk the evening star grows bright.

A SONNET CYCLE

ON AN OLD HYMN BOOK

PUBLISHED IN 1780

THE hands that turned the pages, long ago,
Of this old hymnal, were they young or old?
They were a woman's,—see, the dim leaves
fold

A rusted needle! small the eye; we know
No man could thread it, nor might old eyes show
The narrow way: then, too, old hands are cold.
Hence, she was young, blue-eyed, with hair
of gold?

Brunette? Maybe, none lives who light might
throw.

These pages reek of sinners and their hell.
What were her thoughts when these sad
hymns were sung?

Stained are the leaves—blest by her virgin tears?
Shrined she his violets, to keep them well?
Ah, they are dust, these two, who once
were young—

Dust, in the wreckage of an hundred years.

A SONNET CYCLE

TO A GENIAL OLD MAN

PAN may be dead, but Santa Claus remains,
And once a year he riseth in his might.
Oft have I heard, in silences of night,
Tinkling of bells and clink of reindeer chains,
As o'er the roof he sped through his domains,
When youthful eyes had given up the fight
To glimpse for once the rotund, jolly wight,
Who in a trusting world unchallenged reigns.
Last and the greatest of the gods is he,
Who suffereth little children and is kind;
And when I've rounded out my earthly span
And face at last the Ancient Mystery,
I hope, somewhere in Heaven, I shall
find
Rest on the bosom of that good old man.

A SONNET CYCLE

DAWN

ON earth was silence, even the vast seas
In inarticulate whispers met the shore.
Hushed were the woods. Unlearned in lyric
lore,
Birds flitted mute among the arching trees
Untuned as yet to winds' slow harmonies.
From towering heights unsullied streams did
pour
In leaping radiance, but to sing forebore;
Without a sound they danced through fragrant
leas.
Slow, above all uprose the splendid sun;
Then for the first time, breathless land and deep
Saw God's great banner of the day unfurled.
Creation woke its awful race to run,
While Adam stood, freed from the mist of sleep
And gazed in wide-eyed wonder on the world.

A SONNET CYCLE

THE WAVE

MAJESTIC, slow, full of mysterious grace,
Where sea and sky unite in one pure tone,
Rises the wave and journeys forth alone,
Folding the spindrift in its huge embrace,
Rearing its crest as if it would efface
An ancient enemy, unseen, unknown,
Who mocks forever from an ageless throne
And sees, serene, the ending of the race.
Now, a vast tremor leaps along its length;
Irresolute, it seems to fear the shore;
Then, with tumultuous onslaught, joyous hurls
Its thunderous bulk, filled with demoniac
strength,
On the still sands with heaven-invading roar,
While ravening foam in aimless eddies swirls.

A SONNET CYCLE

ALL HAIL, ROMANCE!

WHEN from the grass the dew of Dawn has fled,
When rose leaves fall unheeded to the ground,
When larks' pure hymns seem only senseless
sound;

In short, when Age, Life's book has nearly read
And closer than the living seem the dead,
While we await their dreamless sleep, profound,
All hail! Romance, that enters with a bound,
And leaves us not alone, uncomforted,
Oh, glorious resurrection of dead Youth!
Not dead but sleeping, ah, the hours were
long,
We deemed you stark beneath Time's careless
sands.

Hail, Splendid Lie! triumphant over Truth;
Once more we live, clear-eyed, courageous,
strong;
We are not old, not ours these trembling hands.

A SONNET CYCLE

MAIS OÙ SONT LES NEIGES D'ANTAN?

(But where are the snows of yesteryear?)

THEIR disembodied souls, where do they stray,
In Hell's mid murk, or in Elysian air?
And are they changed, does song give place to
prayer?

None, none can answer, either yea or nay.
Perhaps they wander down a moonlit way,
With eyes of haunting question, not despair,
And seek, in vain, for one companion rare
Whose memory, blazing, burns with purest ray.
I feel it truth that Cleopatra's smile
Makes glad the nodding fields of asphodel,
That Sheba's queen her borrowed wisdom lends
To Pluto reigning with endearing guile;
That Helen's eyes still weave their ancient spell,
While over all a perfect peace descends.

A SONNET CYCLE

SUNDAY IN THE FOREST

WITHIN the dim cathedral of the pines
 Floats subtly sweet the incense from far fields,
 And one lone worshiper, a wood lark, yields
Light-hearted praise to One whom it divines
 Made the green leaves when sun too fiercely shines
 And in a nook undreamed of, yet safe, shields
 From the thin lance usurping Winter wields
When o'er the world he hurls his conquering lines.
 The Lord is in His holy temple here,
 Unvexed by any thunderous organ's peal,
Nor hedged about by warring, man-made creeds.
 Like to His lark, to me it all seems clear—
 Lord, I look up and smile, I will not
 kneel—
Thou hast no pleasure in a heart that bleeds.

A SONNET CYCLE

CONVICTION

WHAT am I, Lord, that Thou shouldst stay Thy
hand

The while I wander on my aimless way?

But still Thy mercy spares me. Day by day
I see Life like a fragrant rose expand,
Yet e'en Thy rose I cannot understand.

Lo, there are those who walk Thy narrow way
With tear-dimmed eyes and thinning locks of
gray

Who from their youth obeyed Thy last command
Mayhap, in Thy mysterious design

Thou hast a place I presently shall fill.
Now, only this I feel convinced I know:
That sullied streams and waters crystalline
Alike do course obedient to Thy will
Till whelming ocean purifies their flow.

A SONNET CYCLE

TO SWINBURNE

AFTER READING "THE DUKE OF GANDIA"

FAINTS now thy fire unto the ashes gray
That once assailed the stars in leaping flight;
Here flitful flickerings foretell the night
That holds no hope of any after day,
No dream of verse like rainbow-tinted spray
That, in a pagan, waked the old delight—
Joy that was man's ere came the withering
blight
Of labor o'er a world all flushed with play.
Hail and farewell! Thy gods be good to thee
And bear thee to some island of thy
dreams
Where sighs the surf along a shadowy shore;
Lull thee to rest with that old harmony
Thou wovest here with light and wind
and streams
Until Olympian Jove the old days may restore.

A SONNET CYCLE

“THE DUKE OF GANDIA”

A MARBLE temple, lonely, on a hill,
Chastely correct throughout its whole design
But lacking that which stirs the blood like wine
Or makes the pulse beat with a hastier thrill.
Block after block rose at the Master's will
To fill the space decreed by square and line,
But absent is the touch men term divine;
Distant it seems, forbidding, austere, chill.
Within its echoing aisles there slowly stalk
Strange figures alien unto every age,
Having no heart for human love or hate,
Sexless they seem and like a dream their talk:
O Master, tell us why didst thou engage
Upon a voyage for shores so desolate?

A SONNET CYCLE

DEATH OF ASE

(PEER GYNT SUITE)

LIKE wistful ghosts beneath a waning moon,
Seeking a land they have no hope to find:
Roving as homeless as a fitful wind,
Faint notes arise and soft to silence swoon.
To silence swoon, but not to death, for soon
They wake once more and in the soul unbind
Vague memories that through dim ages pined
To rend their cerements and stare at noon.
For whom these tears that all unbidden rise?
What star, now dust, looked on an agony
That had no hearer as its grief out-
poured?
No answer in the moaning music lies,
And at the shadowy Gate of Mystery
Stands the mute angel with his lifted
sword.

A SONNET CYCLE

POE

His was a moonlit mind, where never strayed
The candid sun. Among its hills and vales
Danced ghostly shapes with wild demoniac
wails

That chilled the blood and made the soul afraid.
Upon his peace, Want, like a vulture, preyed,
While o'er him, fainting, sang the alien gales
Of chill rebukes and, at the last, love fails,
And then to rest his piteous clay was laid.
Ah, we who jest beneath the genial sun
And laugh along our mediocre way,
Unwitting of the burden that he bore,
Let us forget the calumny he won,
And for his soul in love and pity pray—
Poor wanderer from Night's Plutonian
shore.

Across the peaceful skies of dreaming night,
Through startled space a blazing meteor flies
Flouting the sober stars who mark its flight
Past their dim ranks to where God's spend-
thrift dies.

A SONNET CYCLE

BY THE SEA: A MEMORY

BENEATH this roof may hours serenely glide
Light-winged, like birds whose song is full of
spring,
Joyous with sun and faint sweet whispering
Of flowers, new-born, that wind-swayed grasses
hide.

Here, may you dream, forgetful of the tide
Of fierce endeavor; may its murmuring
No memory of unlovely cities bring
To hush Pan's pipe, old Pan who has not died.
And when wild winter holds the ruthless town
In icy grasp and winds cry mournfully,
Closing your eyes, may you forget the blight
And see again, where misty moors lead down,
Unwearied still in summer's rhapsody
The long waves languishing in golden light.

A SONNET CYCLE

VENTOSUS

UNDYING, ageless minstrel of all time,
Lightly thy hand o'er viewless strings slow
strays
While once again the glories of old days
Mirage-like rise in every age and clime.
Tempestuous now, the storm of Homer's rhyme
Whispers to silence, while young Marsyas
plays
To dancing Dryads, prodigal with bays,
Forgetful of Apollo—the sublime.
Silence again—whence was that sobbing
moan?
With peaceful stars Night's azure dome
is set
And in rapt stillness dreams each olive tree—
Ah! God of Mercy—'tis Thy Son, alone,
Upon His brow I see the bloody sweat,
In the dim garden of Gethsemane.

A SONNET CYCLE

“SLAVE” OF MICHELANGELO

UNDYING soul of utter loveliness—
Oh, kiss of God breathed on a drooping rose!
When I behold thee, lo! a strange wind blows
From some far land, where never weariness
Nor pain nor sorrow may the heart oppress.
In their sad place triumphantly there flows
Majestic harmony, and with it goes
The soul, abandoned to its strong caress.
Thy lids are heavy, oh, immortal slave!
But thy veiled eyes see planets in their
flight
And read the pity in God’s love-lit eyes.
Thy anguished brows the winds of Heaven
lave
And 'neath thy head an angel’s hand
rests light
While 'round thy feet the blooms of Paradise.

A SONNET CYCLE

“VICTORY” OF SAMOTHRACE

“THE Outcry of Old Beauty”—ah, what spell,
What witchery undying of old days
Oft lures the soul down well-remembered ways
The while it hears some far-off music swell.
In that dim land where only spirits dwell
The weary soul with languorous rapture
sways,
As Memory’s hand o’er plaintive minors
strays,
While to the eye the eager tear drops well.
Thou living triumph o’er destroying Time,
Wide-winged Victory of Samothrace!
Oh, mighty melody of carven stone!
Crystallization of an age sublime,
Serene thou movest with majestic pace,
Omnipotent—immutable—alone!

A SONNET CYCLE

TO FRANK L. WOODRUFF

LIKE incense from the swelling buds of spring
Bird notes rise softly in the purer air,
Buoyant with hope, unshadowed by despair,
Gone and forgot, their winter wandering.
Again glad streams their world-old lyrics sing,
God's perfect peace seems floating every-
where,
While all the world grows palpitant with
prayer—
Grief rules my heart—Grief with the broken wing.
Oh! what to me the pageant of the year,
The miracles of water, trees and grass,
The lark that carols blithely overhead,
When he is gone, courageous, full of cheer,
For nevermore shall speech between us
pass—
Silent he lies, my friend, my friend, alas, is dead!

A SONNET CYCLE

JUDAS (I)

BEHOLD, O God, Thy mandate is obeyed!
What now remains for me whom Thou didst
call
In some dim age when Thou ordained the fall
Of unborn man? I have betrayed
Him whom I loved, yes, Him who oft hath prayed
For my dark soul that knew no hope at all,
Yet strove with Fate's inexorable wall
That hemmed me till His purchase price was paid.
Thou hast Thy Son, but I have lost my
Friend,
Yes, "Friend" He called me, bending to
my kiss
That made Hell shudder in its deepest hold;
His look did both a love and sorrow blend,
That stunned me so I scarce could hear
the hiss
From those who bought the sacrifice I sold.

A SONNET CYCLE

JUDAS (II)

WHERE shall I turn? Earth hath no place for
me—

Thy pure stars pierce me, but they give no
sign

To me, poor pawn in tragedy divine.

Fain would I take Thy place upon the tree—

Aye, set at naught Thy breaking heart's decree;
Bear all Thine anguish: glory that 'twere
mine!

Alas! what is my feeble will to Thine?

Still art Thou God though rent with agony.

O Friend, O Brother Christ, I lay life down,
And in the night my soul shall go, alone,
Remembering the forgiveness in Thine eyes—

Give me oblivion now Thou hast Thy crown;
Let me behold Thee, smiling, on Thy
throne,

Then, bid me sleep, sleep, nevermore to rise.

A SONNET CYCLE

GOLGOTHA

DEATH's shadow lengthens in the anguished eyes
That scan the faces of the throng in vain
For answering love that might assuage the
pain—

But only hate and mockery in them lies.
Unto a thief a wanton shrilly cries
And hums the light notes of a desert strain,
While Cæsar's men beat back the Jews again;
Then all is silent save his piteous sighs.
Withered and old, and racked by hopeless
tears,

A woman gazes on the nail-pierced feet.
Lo! Christ beholds her, then bursts forth His cry
That rings undying through the rolling years,
While Mary listens to her heart repeat:
“Eli, Eli, lama sabacthani!”

A SONNET CYCLE

DEATH OF SAMSON

SIGHTLESS, between these pillars, see me, God,
Mocked by these swine whose drunken jests
uprise
And make Thy night wince with their ribald
cries.
My soul still lives, though cowering in a clod—
A temple, blasted by Thy awful rod.
Oh, if for me forgiveness in Thee lies,
Or thought of vengeance on these who
despise,
Then by the wild ass let their clay be trod.
Only this once, Lord, let me know again
The bygone glory of Thy gift divine.
Thy name be hallowed! Lo, I feel the might
Sweeping triumphant through each withered
vein;
Let me die with them! Oh, glad arms,
entwine
The lofty stones. Hail, ruin and delight!

A SONNET CYCLE

DAVID'S GRIEF

My city sleeps. Oh, would that I could sleep—
Blot out the mockery of the peaceful skies
That bend above me and o'er him who lies
Guiltless in death. I sowed, and now I reap.
Was it for this You lured me from my sheep—
To blind with tears an old man's dimming
eyes,
To see life's light fade out, no more to rise,
To break the heart that doth his image keep?
Ah, once again upon my cheek I feel
The childhood glory of his hair, light
blown.
My arms are empty. Never more to run,
The tireless feet—no artless voice appeal.
Death hath forgot me! Old, and all
alone.
O my son, Absalom; my son, my son!

A SONNET CYCLE

ROBERT E. GONZALES

WE cannot think your voice forever still;
The words grow dim that tell us this is so,
Alas, none dreams the mockingbird will go
When bubbling notes the Summer's beaker fill
And warm a sullen world, against its will,
Until once more the flutes of Childhood blow
From misty lands—the Lands of Long Ago,
Where Beauty, dancing, has no thought of ill.
O brave Gonzales! Unafraid you tread
Amid the stars your homeward, happy way,
Your welcome sure in the great Halls of Light.
Farewell, bright soul! 'tis we, not you are dead,
And speechless, by your unrememb'ring clay
We sense the sweep of angels' wings in flight.

A SONNET CYCLE

IN MEMORIAM: TO GREAYER CLOVER

UPON the bosom of undying France
He lies at rest, who gave her all he had.
Youth, love, old friends—he left them all—was
glad;
Knowing their love, he cast no backward glance.
A kingly knight, he ran to meet his chance
To battle with incarnate lust gone mad,
Whose growing shadow made the whole world sad,
Where children, tearful, met their mothers' glance.
He is not dead! Such souls can never die!
They are like stars, with paths beyond our ken;
We glimpse them for a moment, as they go
To thrill with glory other lands that lie
Perhaps, in darkness. They will come again
Or we shall find them—God has willed it so.

A SONNET CYCLE

ON THE DEATH OF A YOUNG BOY

Now sleep, forever, rests upon thine eyes
And bears away all sorrow and all pain;
No pang at all does thy frail flesh retain;
In viewless fields thy spirit singing flies
Far from this shattered temple, and the sighs
Of us whose tears fall fast like Winter rain,
Remembering what was, and shall not be
again

Until we, too, forsake our earthly guise.

Fold the small hands across the quiet breast,
Hands that have found the door of endless
peace.

Ah! if in benediction they could lie
Upon our hearts so anguished and distressed,
Mayhap our sorrow then would find sur-
cease

In that thou blest us as thou passèd by.

A SONNET CYCLE

A PRAYER

HELP me to do Thy will, but not through fear
Of wrath Divine. The flowers of fear are cold
And have no fragrance. Let me then uphold
To Thy glad glance, untroubled and sincere,
The gorgeous blooms of love. Oh, let no tear
Shine in their leaves: bid them be bright and bold
To speak my love, which grows in being told
And blesseth me in that Thou drawest near.
Shall I not love Thee? Lord, can I forget
Thy ceaseless care since I began to be?
And *all* the griefs averted who can know?
None, none, save Thee who their stern onslaught
met.
Ah, incomplete, thanks fail, how utterly!
Let Thou my love, reflecting Thy love, glow.

A SONNET CYCLE

DUST

SILENCE and night beneath the churchyard mold,
Gone is the sky—only the coffin's lid
Have I for outlook—all the rest is hid.
Yet, far above, the wind along the wold
Makes melodies as in the days of old.
Perhaps, a lark in heaven's pure deeps amid
Pours forth its soul, and I, how shall I rid
My crumbling frame of this triumphant cold?
In empty eyes strange shapes do writhing grope;
My folded hands their progress can not stay;
Helpless I lie while red, liquefient rust
Wages slow ruin in the House of Hope.
Voiceless am I, either to curse or pray
Upon the rayless road to dust, dust, dust.

5

BALLADS
PERSONAL AND PATRIOTIC



BALLADS PERSONAL AND PATRIOTIC

STRANGER, PAUSE AND PRAY FOR THE REPOSE OF BRINDLE

BENEATH this turf lies faithful Brindle,—
No more with love his eyes will kindle;
No more his tail waves to and fro
In eloquence men never know;
Stilled evermore the honest bark
We knew so well and loved to mark.
In some dog paradise he strays
With noble dogs of nobler days.
Perhaps, he's one of Dian's pack,
With Argus greets Ulysses back,
Or Laelaps met him when he came
And told the other dogs his name.
His heart-beats ceased, but in the noble eyes
There lingered yet affection's dying fire,
So loath to go, so sad with foiled desire
Dimmed by the mists of Death, so swift to rise.
There was no sound, the golden words men prize
Seemed mean and poor debased by earthly mire.
He was, and is not—thoughts that would not tire

BALLADS

Stranger, Pause and Pray [CONTINUED]

Moaned through our minds with pitiless soft
cries.

No more, no more, of all sad words the worst,
That hold no blessing now or hope to be,
That have no power to raise this languished
head,

That bring no water to our sorrow's thirst.
He lived and loved and ne'er again shall be—
Old Brindle, our belovèd dog, is dead.

God grant that when our time shall be,
When o'er Death's cold and sunless sea,
That the first anthem we remark
May be old Brindle's "welcome" bark.

BALLADS

TO BLOOMERS, FAITHFUL BULLDOG

THE night is dark, and the wild wind singeth
A sorrowful song in the rain-lashed trees—
And my heart is sad with a grief that clingeth
And cries for tribute for hours of ease.

Far down at the foot of the hill out yonder
She lieth alone in the cold and wet,
And this is the thought that I sit and ponder—
Does she dream in her sleep I will never forget?

Ah, this is the room where we played together
In idle moments ere lamps were lit,
And this is the chair with the old red leather
Where when she was weary she loved to sit.

Never again will she run to meet me,
Bringing me home at the close of day;
Never again will her glad eyes greet me,
Full of the love that she could not say.

Does she know that her memory runneth ever
Like some clear stream through a barren land,

BALLADS

To Bloomers, Faithful Bulldog [CONTINUED]

Till death shall the heart and brain dissever?
Does she know all this? Can she understand?

If I knew that she knew—but who shall discover
The ways of death, whether pleasure or pain?
I can see that the heavens are black above her,
I can hear the scourge of the pitiless rain.

BALLADS

IN ARCADY

In Clovercroft, Arcadia,
'Tis there that I would be
To watch God at his miracles
That seem wrought just for me—
Ah, blessed eyes that see!

In Clovercroft, Arcadia,
When gently thrills the wheat,
I feel old friends are passing,
Though I may not stay their feet—
But mine shall be as fleet.

In Clovercroft, Arcadia,
How soft the breezes blow!
They murmur like loved voices
I never more shall know—
Hushed, ah, so long ago!

BALLADS

“FAR AWAY AND LONG AGO”—

JUST the title of a book
Wherein I may never look,
Yet the magic of the phrase
Raises ghosts of other days.
Luminous they float along—
Bits of laughter, bits of song,
Glimpses of forgotten dawns,
Dewdrops on fresh upland lawns,
All the beauty treasured so,
Far away and long ago;
Crescent moons by clouds half veiled,
Mists along a river trailed,
Whispers in gay autumn leaves,
Stealthy raindrops on the eaves.
Ah, vanished days of long ago,
Why is it that we miss you so?
What subtle charm did you possess
Whose mem’ry is a soft caress
Whene’er we retrospective grow?

Was it of life we did not know,
And dreamt that joy outbalanced woe,

BALLADS

“Far Away and Long Ago”—[CONTINUED]

That now we feel its emptiness,
Ah, vanished days?
Or is it to Time's touch we owe
The distant picture's roseate glow?

BALLADS

WATER

MAKER of melody since time began,
Sing on, sing on, till Time shall be no more.
Oh, sing to me the old unwritten score
That the young stars share with the dreaming
Pan.

Thy notes the gulf of vanished centuries span,
But float unheeded on a lifeless shore.

AN OLD SEA-CAPTAIN

LOVER of ships and kinsman of the seas,
Rapt rambler in far stellar spaces clean,
Alien for you the cities' tawdry sheen
Where Life's glad wine grows bitter on foul lees.
These have no spell your hoyden Muse to please,
Who laughs with glee when through the rigging
keen
Winds rage and buffet cloudy spars that lean
To meet the spindrift's leaping, stinging tease.

BALLADS

THE COMET

HAUNTER of solitudes vast;
Of awful, untenanted spaces—
Even the voice of Jehovah
Whispering, dies at their threshold:
Vainly seeking their confines,
Weary his all-seeing eyes.
Out of the ultimate night
Thou rushest in terrible splendor.
Wrecks of forgotten worlds
Whirl in thy desolate train;
Sweep past old orbits remembered
Through millions of centuries gone.
Shrinking, the virginal stars
Reel from thy limitless pathway,
While, like blown sands of the desert,
Magnificent suns mark thy speed.

BALLADS

SONG OF THE LIBERATED

DEEP, deep, underground,
Here is neither light nor sound.
Here we lie in sleep profound,
Dreaming when we shall awaken,
Careless that we are forsaken,
Many friends their way have taken
To the small house 'neath the mound.

Rest, rest, here is calm
For our still hearts have no qualm
Where Oblivion pours her balm.
Overhead birds may be singing,
Flowers amid the grasses springing,
To the breeze their perfume flinging
Like a soul's unconscious psalm.

Life, Love, both are done.
Tears, laughter, they are one.
What care we? Our race is run.
But to those above us straying
We would whisper "Cease not playing,
Let your lives be one long Maying,
Here, none cares who lost or won."

BALLADS

A BALLADE OF NOVEMBER

NOVEMBER winds shriek by my door
And drive the homeless leaves of spring;
Where now their pageantry of yore?
Where now their summer blossoming?
Where now the birds once wont to sing
Fleet songs of poignant ecstasy?
I fancy Fate is murmuring:
"Never again shall these things be."

These fragile leaves, so stripped, so poor,
Saw many a dawn its radiance fling
Across high Heaven's shadowed floor
And heard the day's awakening;
Saw the moon's scythe unwearying
Harvest the stars from sea to sea—
For you, dim ghosts, where'er you cling
Never again shall these things be.

Oft from the tales of Dryads' lore
I've heard you faintly whispering
Or rapt upon a river's shore
You heard the Naiads' thoughts take wing,
While rain elves would thin music bring
Full of an ancient witchery.

BALLADS

A Ballade of November [CONTINUED]

Poor leaves, dead, unremembering!
Never again shall these things be.

Prince, see our fire is languishing—
Pile on more logs, set new sparks free!
See how they die a-hurrying—
Never again shall these things be.

BALLADS

“DE SENECTUTE”

IN youth, when success is a passive prize,
Smiling we lift life's waiting gauge;
Young blood is hot, and we quite despise
The trifling battle that man must wage.
But grateful the truce that comes with age,
When the sun is stayed on the world's wide rim—
Ah, then is the time for the lettered page,
When cheeks are faded and eyes are dim.

Alone by the fire, when the daylight dies
And the restless wind begins to rage,
While the scurrying sparks in the chimney rise;
Shall I in fancy a place engage
With Laurence Sterne in the Paris stage—
Or have Uncle Toby and Corporal Trim
A sounder claim on my patronage,
When cheeks are faded and eyes are dim?

Alas, alas, how Old Time flies
When in such verdant pasturage.
I' faith I must philosophize,
And Seneca is the proper sage
When nearly through life's pilgrimage,

BALLADS

“De Senectute” [CONTINUED]

Or Socrates—why leave out him?—
Since he can also ills assuage,
When cheeks are faded and eyes are dim.

When the soul despairs in its rusting cage
And deems forgetful the warder grim,
Books are a man’s best heritage
When cheeks are faded and eyes are dim.

BALLADS

AFTER MANILA

HARKEN, O merciful God! Give ear to the prayers of a nation

Treading with resolute steps the paths pointed out to our fathers.

Bloody and blackened with war, let us kneel for awhile at Thine altars,

Craving Thy blessing, O Lord! O do Thou guide and direct us:

Make us the sword of Thy wrath: let our cannon echo Thy thunder!

Vengeance is Mine, saith the Lord; I will repay, saith Jehovah.

Strengthen our arms and uphold us, for without Thee we are helpless;

Then shall our birthright of Freedom be shared with our down-trodden brother;

And Thine be the glory, O Lord—yea, Thine be the glory forever!

BALLADS

OVER, OVER THERE!

NORTH, South, East, West,
They are sending forth their best
O'er the Hun-infested brine,
To their places in the line,
With the Britons and the French
In the hellish, hard held trench,
See them stand!

Mother, father, sister, wife,
Could not keep them from the strife;
With a courage high, eternal,
They have dared the strife infernal;
Æons hence will song and story
Hymn their names and unsought glory
Through the land.

They will choke the German brute,
End his ravishing and loot,
Harry him with steel and shell,
Bind him in his bloody hell;
Then across the peaceful foam,
Joyous will they journey home,
Calm and bland.

BALLADS

Over, Over There! [CONTINUED]

North, South, East, West,
Glory to thy children blest!
Blood o' Christ were spilt in vain,
Did they fail to forge a chain
That would bring a lasting peace,
And humanity's release—

From the Hun.

BALLADS

“THE BELOVED VAGABOND”

DEAR Allison, your likeness is enthroned
Above my books—a most congenial clime,
That knows not rigor, nor the flight of Time.
'Tis holy ground, where fairy horns, faint
toned,
Still lure Youth's galley to a land disowned
Yet lives forever in its prose and rime;
Where Sorrow fades, like some far-distant
chime
And where one finds his ev'ry sin condoned.
“A Land of Make Believe,” I hear you say?
Ah, no, old friend, 'tis very real to me,
The silent converse of these quiet men.
And thus, I know there will be many a day
When I shall hear, in well belovéd key,
Your voice, e'en of old, and so—Amen!

BALLADS

“DOWN IN OLD VIRGINIA”

Way down in Old Virginia
Where the mountains kiss the skies,
And whose waters flowing seaward
Croon their dreamy lullabies.

Where the waving pines make music
For every wand’ring breeze,
While the surf on far-off beaches
Seems the drowsy hum of bees.

Within thy jeweled house of night
The whip-poor-will makes moan,
But all the golden deeps of dawn
The mocking-bird will own.

Above thy daisied meadows
The vagrant clouds soft float—
So loath to leave thy loveliness
For ruder climes remote.

State love’s no doubt a glorious thing,
But *this* is what is *true*,—
Since you are in Virginia,
Why for me—Virginia’s you.

BALLADS

“COUSIN JANE”

COUSIN JANE, Cousin Jane,
Let me say your name again,
For its mere enunciation
Adds a brightness to creation,
Ah, we are a blessed Nation
Having *you*—Cousin Jane.

Always sympathetic, kind,
To the faults of others blind,
You are like a stately flower
Lovelier with each passing hour,
Drawing with compelling power
All our hearts—Cousin Jane.

“Just a woman”—that is all,
And *I'm* glad of Adam's fall.
You don't care to run man's race,
Not for *you* the voting place,
For serene, with queenly grace
You're supreme—Cousin Jane.

Cousin Jane, Cousin Jane,
Grateful sunshine after rain,

BALLADS

“Cousin Jane” [CONTINUED]

I must end this hymn of praise
Wishing you unnumbered days,
While “the Club” its homage pays.
Au revoir—Cousin Jane.

BALLADS

BEST LOVE

THOU art not my first love,
I loved before we met—
The memory of that summer song
Is pleasing to me yet.
No, thou art my last love,
My sweetest and my best;
My heart but shed its outer leaves
To give *thee* all the rest.

WEARINESS

THE wind sighs sadly through the quivering
leaves,
As though some mem'ry dreaming wakes and
grieves
Its restless spirit till its peace has flown
And left it murmur'ring to itself alone.

Its sound recalls the dead, forgotten years,
The old sweet days of mingled hopes and fears.
Time for a moment stays his tireless flight.
My soul is lonely, I am tired to-night.

BALLADS

GOOD NIGHT

GOOD NIGHT, dear heart;
The moon's bright barque
Sails softly down the western skies,
And still I linger loath to part
From the sweet spell of your dark eyes.

Good night, dear heart;
The day is long,
But languorous night will come again,
Sweet time for lovers set apart
To taste love's cup of joy and pain.

REUNION

WHEN my time comes to die may I be lying in some
low-ceiled room, dimmed by advancing shadows.
By my head, an open window where light draperies
float and cling, in gentle airs that greet the
rising moon—

A moon half-veiled in drifting clouds and seen
through budding boughs of gnarled old apple trees.

So, let me dream, until my homeless soul shall
merge, unnoticed, with the brooding night.

BALLADS

WHAT THE WIND SINGS

WHEN I was a child I loved to lie upon a green
hill-side and watch the clouds drifting:
Wondered whence they come and whither bound?
The music of the wind in the somber pines thrilled
me.

Often I felt at the threshold of divining the mean-
ing of the wordless cadences.

And I went out into the world and strove as best
I could.

Now, I am old and gray and I should love to lie
upon a green hill-side and watch the clouds
drifting, incurious about their harbor.

I know now what the wind sings to the pines, and
I am very weary.

BALLADS

PRESENCES

FOR so many years Death seemed to me a horrible oppressor—a cruel and malignant giant. When I was young he took my mother and later, oh, so many of my friends. And some of these so suddenly. It was as if he dashed his uncouth fist to a child's lips just parting in a song of the joy of Life. I have looked through tears into the open graves; felt the bereaved move back in mute agony, while my heart echoed the sound of the descending clods—"No more, no more, alas, no more."

But I know now that I have misjudged Death. When I lie in the quiet of a country night, I feel these vanished loved ones about me. I hear no word, but looking up at the Heavens, it seems as if the star-shine were made vocal: The air seems full of pulsations that cannot rend our atmosphere and become words. Unhearing, I know, nevertheless, the message my beloved are calling. It is "Peace." And again, I feel the tears upon my lids, but they are not for the departed.

BALLADS

“FINIS”

THE coals are dying in the grate
And it is late.
The widening shadows on the wall
Are like a pall.
And ghosts of dead leaves scourged with rain
Cling to the pane.
Yet once upon a happy tree
They danced in glee.
And once was Youth, and Hope, and Thou,—
Ah, me!—but now—
The coals are dying in the grate—
And it is late!

**FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU
CHILDHOOD VERSES TO THE POET'S
DAUGHTER, JUDITH AYLETT**

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU
CHILDHOOD VERSES TO THE POET'S
DAUGHTER, JUDITH AYLETT

JU-JU

THERE is a tiny shallop comes,
Just at the close of day
And into it my baby slips
And softly sails away.

Away, unto the land of dreams;
A country free from care,
And only little children
Can ever enter there.

The little boat is made of pearl,
The mast of purest gold,
Its sails, the wings of butterflies
The roving night-wind holds.

It does not keep to ocean lanes,
Well known to mundane tars,
But navigates the Milky Way
And cruises 'midst the stars.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

Ju-Ju [CONTINUED]

Old Ursus Major kindly growls
As she goes flashing by,
The Dog Star romps along behind
With joyous canine cry.

They chase the fire-fly Pleiades
And flit through Saturn's rings
And never tire, for in that land
Are most entrancing things.

But sometimes she grows hungry,
From all the boisterous play,
Then Mercury takes the Dipper up
And skims the Milky Way.

And perched in Cassiopeia's Chair,
She drinks her little fill,
The panting Dog Star's mouth is wide
To catch what she may spill.

They coast down miles of moonbeams
And plait the comet's tails,
With Gemini—the Heavenly Twins—
They skip the star strewn vales.

But oh! I am so lonesome
This time she is away,
Although she *seems* to be still here,
As with her hair I play.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

Ju-Ju [CONTINUED]

And many times while she is gone
I brush away a tear—
“Suppose she should forget the road
From 'way up there to here?”

I cannot hear her little boat
Grate on the viewless sands,
I only know that she is back
By her tiny rose leaf hands.

And so I want them both in mine
When I lie down to rest
So when she comes I shall awake
And help her to her nest.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

“TRAILING CLOUDS OF GLORY”

So light her feet upon the earth
One senses unseen wings—
Dear childish feet, that stir, perhaps,
The homeless dust of kings.

The light of Heaven lingers yet
Within her wond’ring eyes—
Pure eyes that mirror naught of life
And all of Paradise.

To that Great Chord, we know as God
Her soul still trembles true,
But mine will never breathe again
The melody it knew.

She quivers at the flush of Dawn
And reads the rhythmic rain,
The hidden harmonies of streams
Know they are found again.

For her the new born Sun God flings
Through forests, dim and old,
Sheaf after sheaf, the prodigal,
His javelins of gold.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

“Trailing Clouds of Glory” [CONTINUED]

The wind steals from the grassy mounds,
Half hidden on the hill
To linger lightly in her hair
And dream that it was chill.

Oh, lovely Child! would I could win
To that bright world of thine,
But I must worship from afar,
Thy small hand clasped in mine.

Into the outer darkness thrust,
I kneel in eager prayer
And hear the hopeless words “Too late,
You can not enter there.”

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

SUPREME COURT DECISIONS

My little Ju-Ju, just turned three,
On yesterday, remarked of me:
"My Dad's a good ol' man."
The wise and prudent know not this,
The height of wisdom they must miss,
According to God's plan.

I had my doubts about myself,
For I have none of this world's pelf
And little knowledge, too.
But *now* I have no care at all,
I'm unconcernèd o'er Adam's fall,
I really think I'll do.

For when St. Peter scowls at me
Ju-Ju will cry, triumphantly:
"My Dad's a *good* ol' man!"

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

“THE FEMALE OFFENDER”

I’VE many friends who live in books,
Old friends, I made when young,
And well I know just how each looks;
How musical each tongue.

And oftentimes I hear them call
With voice untouched by time;
How tenderly their accents fall,
In classic prose or rime.

But by the time I’ve put away
My guest’s cane, hat or wrap,
I gasp in sudden disarray—
And Judy’s in my lap.

Dear child of Now, what does she care
For Lear’s tremendous woe,
Achilles’ wrath, or Circe’s snare,
Or topless Troy laid low?

The blue *Æ*gean had no deep
Unfathomed like her eyes,
O’er which her soul’s reflections creep—
White clouds in April skies.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

"The Female Offender" [CONTINUED]

But since my honored guest has fled
With symptoms of distress,
With clumsy hand I stroke her head—
Oh, aureate loveliness!

Yet, all the same I tell myself
When she is tucked in bed
I'll tip-toe back unto that shelf
And read that book I read.

I'll read and smoke—Ulysses smoked,
In fact, I know he did
Because he never grew provoked
But did what ladies bid.

But when upon my antique back
I've carried her upstairs,
I've felt my soul upon the rack
When light she lisped her prayers.

I settle down and once again
The old familiars come,
But to be truthful, now and then,
My mind will wander *some*.

I crave forgiveness and once more
My friend resumes his talk—
I wonder if I shut that door,
And back upstairs I walk.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

“The Female Offender” [CONTINUED]

Yes, back upstairs and leave my friend,
While I lean o'er her nest,
Unheeding how the minutes wend
Since each one brings her rest.

How rhythmic is the rise and fall
Of her untroubled breast;
God seems no riddle after all
But only dreamless rest.

And so I never go downstairs
When I've come back this way.
Old friends won't talk to empty chairs,
I'll lose them day by day.

And oh! I hate to lose them too,
And they have prior claim,
I don't know what to do, do you?
Now isn't this a shame?

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

THE WANDERER

“BELIEVE in transmigration”? Sure!
‘Tis an old tale with me,
And I know well how Noah felt
When he put forth to sea.

For I am known of beasts and birds
And dwarfs and giants too,
I am so used to all of these
I make no more ado.

But oh, it is the gentlest soul
That animates them all,
For Ju-Ju is the loveliest child
I *know* since Abel’s fall.

I own, at first, I felt some fear
When dozing in my chair
To have a lion pounce on me
And drag me to his lair.

But one gets used to anything,
As my experience shows;
I could not count how many times
The Blackbird’s nipped my nose.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

The Wanderer [CONTINUED]

I climb the bean-stalk o'er and o'er
And get the Giant worried,
When in pursuit he falls on me
I never now get flurried.

Serene, Red Ridinghood I watch
Go idling through the wood—
A Robber Kitten soon she'll be
Who never more 'll be good.

When Peter Rabbit homeward hikes
From stern McGregor's field,
I hide him in my scanty lap
Until his fears are healed.

And now and then the Pussy-Cat,
Who called upon the Queen,
Will whet her claws upon my legs
Which are so long and lean.

I've slept with bears and elephants
And waked with pirate kings;
Have seen the Cow jump o'er the Moon
And various other things.

Of all the changes that she has
One, I love most of all,
Comes with the dying of the day,
When soft the shadows fall.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

The Wanderer [CONTINUED]

When she climbs weary to my lap,
Her own dear self at last
Secure from any further change,
The long day's perils past.

Lightly she lies upon my arm,
Her voice a whisper grows,
And sleep descends upon her eyes
Like dewdrops on a rose.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

FOR JU-JU IN 19—

I WRITE these lines, that in some far off day
Your eyes, that mirrored me, may look them o'er
And hear me whisper from an unknown shore
A deathless love, though I who write be clay.
Oh! let me write them quickly, while I may,
Each fleeting hour I loved you more and more;
What *my* youth lacked *your* childhood did restore—
Ah, dear, how eagerly I watched your play!
And I would tell you, little child of mine,
You never gave to me a moment's pain,
But many times your little hands did bless
And turn Life's bitter water into wine;
And so, I yearn to speak to you again
And comfort *you* in unguessed weariness.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

MIST

SHE used to climb upon my knees;
Hands, light as rose leaves, closed my eyes,
Then, “ ‘tendin’ like” the chairs were trees,
She’d hide, while bird-like notes would rise—
“Daddy, come find me!”

And sometimes in her dreams at night,
Alarmed, may be, by culprit fay,
She’d find my hand and hold it tight;
In tears and laughter she would pray—
“Daddy, come find me!”

The pity of the stars is mine;
The requiem that the night winds sings
Dies in a melody divine—
But ah, the golden bell that rings—
“Daddy, come find me!”

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

JUDY

To-night I left her while she slept
With curly head upon her arm,
And as I through the darkness crept
I prayed; "Christ keep her from all harm.

"Thou wast thyself a little child
And looked with love upon the world
To find thyself despised, reviled,
And all thy blessings backward hurled.

"But thou couldst gaze through fleeting space
To where God sorrowed on his throne,
And read the love writ on his face
And know thou wast not all alone.

"Therefore, I pray thee, Lord divine,
Thy hand in benediction lay
On her bright head, this child of mine,
And smile upon her night and day.

"Oh, let her glimpse Thee when the sun
Bursts from the sepulcher of night,
While golden streams ecstatic run
Where sing Thy oceans in their might."

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

FATHER'S SINS FORGOT

I WATCHED my child at play before the fire
Croon softly to the dancing shadows there
With eager hands which were full fain to snare
The dusky shapes that mocked at her desire.
At last the hopeless game began to tire,
The little hands grew quiet, ceased the air,
And slowly crawling to her mother's chair
Soon gentle sleep paid all her labors' hire.
Then—lo! a ray of light illumed my soul,
God's ways grew plain; old fears were dashed
aside.

O Christ! I prayed, though I reach not the goal
Thou wilt receive me, though in vain I tried;
Thou wilt write fair my life's oft blotted scroll,
Thy arms will bear me o'er Death's slumb'rous
tide.

FROM THE BOOK OF JU-JU

WHEN JUDY READS

WHEN Judy reads, old words, outworn,
Seem fresh as June's most dewy morn;
They wear once more their ancient dress
And dance in nymph-like loveliness—
To sun-beam notes from fairy horn.

I hear the wind's feet o'er the corn,
The doves amid the elms, forlorn—
Life's lightest music wakes to bless,
 When Judy reads.

Yet, those trite words I viewed with scorn,
Unguessed the rose, so plain the thorn;
But when her childish lips caress
Those worn old words, in tenderness,
I wish I too, might be reborn—
 When Judy reads.



IN LIGHTER VEIN

IN LIGHTER VEIN

BUSINESS MAN SAMPSON TO POET SAMPSON

*On the Occasion of his Fortieth birthday,
April 26, 1910*

TIME for you to settle down,
Time to quit your fooling,
Gray the hair that once was brown,
Youth should now be cooling.

Time for you to meditate
On the years you've wasted;
Sinner, turn ere 'tis too late
And in hell you're basted.

Forty years I've spent with you,
Not without compunction,
Yet, you've scorned my friendship true,
Scoffed each fond injunction.

Why can't you, a married man,
With two winsome daughters,

IN LIGHTER VEIN

Sampson to Sampson [CONTINUED]

On Parnassus put the ban,
Cut Pierian waters?

Fill your pipe with natural leaf,
Dream of business matters;
Man, you're on the road to grief,
Penury and tatters!

Let the winds and waves alone,
They are busy working,
When you rant of roses blown
You are only shirking.

Forty years have I been bored
By your senseless habits,
Seen them, heedless how I roared,
Multiply like rabbits.

Have some pity on me now,
Some consideration,
Or I'll pleasure have, I vow,
In your deep damnation.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

“ONE POINT OF VIEW”

“The Editor of Life regrets
He can not use the stuff enclosed.”
Still, no hard feeling he begets;
“The Editor of Life *regretsAlas, poor man: coerced, he frets,
And may not act as he’s disposed—
“The Editor of Life regrets
He *can not* use the stuff enclosed.”*

IN LIGHTER VEIN

“THE WORM TURNS”

WHY is it nearly all the verse
In “high class magazines”
Some occult ailment does rehearse
Midst deeply tragic scenes?

The authors diagnose their ills
Of body, mind, or soul,
And then neglect to take the pills
That could these fits control.

The editors compound these crimes
By coddling them with cash,
While countless *healthy* men of rimes
Three times a day eat—hash.

If you, or I, a poem send
That echoes not a groan,
Before the week is at an end
The “pome” comes back—alone.

O poets in the cultured east,
Have pity on us pray—
In charity, the very least
Poor dog should have his day.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

MONTVILLE

LONELY it stands upon a gentle hill
And looks toward the pines across the moor
Wistful and sad for vanished days of yore
When song and laughter fleeting Time did
kill.

Now all is silent save a whip-poor-will,
Whose melancholy notes ring o'er and o'er
Like some damned soul upon an alien shore,
Unwilling yet its shallow grave to fill.
And this was Montville—here came LaFayette
And youthful Henry with his violin,
Progenitor of mediocre Pats—
Yea, these dull walls that knew the minuet
And echoed oft with revelry and din
Are festooned, decked and garlanded with bats.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING

‘For thou shalt forget thy misery;
Thou shalt remember it as waters that are passed
away.’

I GRIEVE to learn you have succumbed to mumps—
I’ve never had them, but I feel for you.
What do I care if April’s skies be blue?
They cannot lift me from the doleful dumps.
Bleak visaged Sorrow on my shoulder humps
And drapes my Muse in garb of Stygian hue.
Music consoles me not, and “bridge” fails, too,
For naught care I if hearts or spades be trumps.

If sinners’ prayers had *any* weight above
I’d say a million masses for your peace,
Or elbow planets from their flaming ways
And e’en Saint Peter from his gate-way shove
To speak the word that might win your
release—

But these poor blooms—how shall *they* light
your days?

IN LIGHTER VEIN

WHEN YOUR WIFE'S AWAY

Of all the insidious
Temptations invidious
Contrived by the devil to pull a man
down,
There is none more delusive,
Seductive, abusive,
Than the snare of a man with his
wife out of town.

He feels such delightfulness,
Stay-out-all-nightfulness,—
'Tis one without pain;
A bachelor rakishness,
None can explain.

His wife may be beautiful, tender and
dutiful;
'Tis not her absence would cause him
delight;
But the d—d opportunity,
The baleful immunity
Scatters his scruples as day scatters
night.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

OLD YADKIN CORN

OLD Yadkin Valley Corn! Ah, amber tinted juice
That makes an ashen tinted world burst into flower,
Annihilating Care; filling each barren hour
With golden sunshine. Shall I abstain—what use?
When I have thee, thou art thy best excuse.
When patient merit bows to usurped power
Why should *I* give *my* soul for Envy to devour?
So 'raus mit care! Be on your way—vamoose!
Yes, let me tip the faithful jug once more
And learn the legends of a hundred happy hills
And know again the song the stars sang once before
The days of saw-mills, cotton gins and other ills.
Yet once again, until the unnoticed floor
Glides gently up and further dalliance kills.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

REFLECTIONS ON DIETING AND DOCTORS

WHEN I look o'er a bill of fare
And see the things there are to eat,
My heart grows sick with grim despair
To think that *I* must not touch meat.

The coy Lynnhaven fears me not,
Nor lobster, nor the shrinking clam.
"Just vegetables" are my lot,
And for them I don't give a damn.

Black pepper, too, I must forswear,
And vinegar, that adds a zest,
So now for salads I don't care,
When near the "Islands of the Blest."

The puny pickle, too, is barred,
The mango and the sprightly dill;
Ye gods! but life is passing hard
When such wee things may make us ill.

And Burgundy and Scotch and ale,
Plebeian beer and Dublin stout,

IN LIGHTER VEIN

Reflections on Dieting [CONTINUED]

Sauternes, liquors and gin so pale,
The heartless Doctor has cut out.

The liquor leaps within the glass;
The planked steak's incense fills the air;
But they mean naught to me, alas!
I have to think I do not care.

No doubt for doctors there is use—
They bring us to this world of sin—
Yet, surely, with but small excuse
They often send us out agin.

The Doctor is all right, I guess,
As poor misguided doctors go,
But he has made *my* life a mess—
A dreary wilderness of woe.

And when I take my golden harp
And swat a husky chord in G,
I trust I'll see that Doctor sharp
Well damned for all eternity.

SAMPSON AGONISTES.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

TO A POLYPHONIC POET

To your polyphonic prose
God, perhaps, the answer knows. . . .
As a dewdrop in the sun
Mirrors all it looks upon,
So should verse, it seems to me,
Have a hint of verity.
Verity, with changing hue,
Unsuspected prospects, new.
Where a brook slips o'er a stone
Vocal makes its cryptic tone,
Lift one to a high surmise
That a beauty latent lies.
Pushing old horizons back,
Followed still by gleaming track
Till no more life's baffling bars
Block the pathway to the stars.
All your statements seem so bald,
Do your spirits come when called?
Should you write "the skies are blue,"
Would one guess a wider view?
Hear the whirring wings of birds,
Scent the breath of grazing herds,
Catch the secrets of the grass
Told to vagrant winds that pass?

IN LIGHTER VEIN

To a Polyphonic Poet [CONTINUED]

No, I'd see the printed page—
Set like good Queen Bess' stage,
"This a horse" and "this a tree,"
"This a castle by the sea."

Ah, your words are lifeless, dead,
Lapped in dull, funereal lead.

I am sorry this is so
For an old man loves the glow—
Loves to hear words hiss and burn
Ere they back to ashes turn,
Whispering of forgotten springs
And of unremembered things;
So I lay "Can Grande" by—
Would I did so with a sigh.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

“WORDS, WORDS, WORDS!”

I READ a poem yesterday
That touched my world-worn heart,
And I was not ashamed to feel
Tears to my old eyes start.

Those verses freed me for a time
From every fear and care;
I thought I heard the seraphs' wings
Beat softly Heaven's pure air.

But, gentle reader, ask me not
That poem's words or sense,
For neither could I understand—
Which shows it was immense.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

COVERLY

Of all the many visits I have paid
That one to Coverly was far the best.
I did not do one blessed thing but rest,
By thought of host or hostess undismayed.
I felt like Adam did when, négligé'd
And all forgetful of his coming test,
He loafed and loafed and thought himself
well blessed
That his Creator such a long time stayed.
True hospitality, alas, is rare,
Since self-effacement is too great a load
For average hosts to bear with smiling face.
Therefore, believe me, Lady, when I swear
That Heaven for me will make no good abode
While mem'ry holds of Coverly a trace.

IN LIGHTER VEIN

BALLADE OF OLD TIME BARTENDERS

"They are all gone, the old familiar faces."

GAY priests of Bacchus that I once knew well,
Take ye this farewell tribute from a friend;
A sprig of mint, in fields of asphodel,
May bring ye cheer and in its fragrance tend
To breathe on Memory's ashes till they send
Abroad, once more, their Apollonian gleam
And drive the mists from Lethe's sleepy stream.
Here's hoping that a happier day may dawn;
Meanwhile, I drowse and query in each dream:
"Old time bartenders, whither have ye gone?"

Around your ruined shrines what memories dwell
Of royal Bourbon and full many a blend!
I had a friend who, blindfolded, could smell
And call each famous brand. He could depend
On nose alone. Where doth that nose now wend?
Mnemosyne! we two could fill a ream,
Keening these lovers with their single theme.
Perhaps, now, on some paradisal lawn,
They pour old Burgundy, with ruby beam:
"Old time bartenders, whither have ye gone?"

IN LIGHTER VEIN

Ballade of Old Time Bartenders [CONTINUED]

Where are the cocktails that ye threw pell mell
From hand to hand with careless, graceful bend?
The frappéd absinthe that could hurry hell
And speed the traveler to his journey's end,
And give the lie to "Ne'er too late to mend?"
Where are the dusty cellars, wont to teem
With laughter prisoned, eager to redeem
From grasping age youth's melancholy pawn?
Ye will not heed me, though distressed I scream:
"Old time bartenders, whither have ye gone?"

L'ENVOI

Lord Bacchus, prithee, hold in high esteem
These splendid brothers of old Polypheme;
Bend down thine ear to me, alone, forlorn.
When dead, my first request will be, I deem:
"Old time bartenders, whither have ye gone?"

IN LIGHTER VEIN

FORSAKEN

SOMETIMES I think she has not gone away:
Here is her book, just as she laid it by;
Only the lilies faded in it lie
In mute remembrance of a happier day.
Her chair stands empty, in the firelight's play:
All things that knew her seem her name to sigh
And Hope is dead and mocks me when I try
In Life's dun skies to find one golden ray.
My little child, with piteous, tear stained face,
Lisps sadly "When will Mother come again?"
How can I answer *her*? Aye, there's the rub!
Oh, let us fly from this tormenting place,
Whose ev'ry aspect thrills with cruel pain
When—Mother's playing "Auction" at the Club!

IN LIGHTER VEIN

TO OUR GREAT-GREAT-GRANDFATHER, PATRICK HENRY

THE Belgian hare could nothing to you show,
Prolific Patrick—what a family man!—
You made G. Washington an “also ran,”
And saw with pride your sixteen children grow
To sixty grandchildren, ere Death laid low
The founder of a universal clan:
Placed on your infant industry the ban,
And hushed the lullabies we fain would know.
The cradle in your house was never still:
It was the Rock of Ages, so to speak,
And whilst you rocked, were dreams of freedom
spun,
'Midst infants' cries, distracting, piercing, shrill.
And yet, we learn, when History's page we
seek—
“The Father of his country—Washington!”

JUVENILIA

JUVENILIA

“WITH PIPE AND BOOK BEFORE THE FIRE”

“May blessings rest upon the head of him who invented books.”

With pipe and book before the fire,
Kind friends and true which never tire,
I'd spend my life, if it might be,
Nor wish for better company,
Than pipe and book.

So let the world wag as it will,
A cure have I for every ill;
Yet—if its spleen my mind should sour,
There on my shelf is Schopenhauer.

Or if to satire I incline,
With caustic wit in every line—
See—there in yonder well-thumbed row
Is Don Francesco Quevedo.

Or should I wish wit sugar-coated,
There's Q. H. Flaccus—margins noted:

JUVENILIA

“With Pipe and Book” [CONTINUED]

And if in atheistic vein,
I know just where to find Tom Paine.

And would I view life’s every phase,
See every passion stripped of glaze
By one who stands without a peer—
I need not say ’tis Will Shakespeare.

The clock strikes twelve and finds me idle;
I must to bed—O where’s my Bible?

JUVENILIA

"I WAS A STRANGER AND YE TOOK ME IN"

(To Mrs. Jane Ewing Speed)

I do not sing of strangled love,
Mad kisses—last caresses:
For her as true as heaven above,
My pen the paper presses.

I sing of her whose kindly ways
Bring me a world of pleasure.
Sweet sunlight of my weary days,
I love her past all measure.

A sympathetic ear she'll lend
To all my boyish troubles;
And when an hour with her I spend,
My cares dissolve like bubbles.

My ragged socks she'll neatly darn,
On my old clothes put patches:
Look if you will, but let me warn
'Tis not on earth her match is.

JUVENILIA

“I Was a Stranger” [CONTINUED]

God bless her cheery, loving face
And shield her from all danger
And give her heaven’s highest place,
Who took me in—a stranger.

JUVENILIA

“HENCE VAIN, DELUDING JOYS”

COME, my old pipe, when love grows cold,
When pleasure slips the eager hold,
When trusted ones in anger turn,
And low the fires of friendship burn—

Come, my old pipe.

Come, my old pipe, your blackened bowl
Holds solace for my weary soul;
What care I if M.D.'s do say
Your fragrant smoke curtails life's day?—

Come, my old pipe.

Come, my old pipe, the smoke rings curl
And glide and twist, and writhe, and whirl:
And though old death your stem bestride,
His fleshless phiz we will deride.

Come, my old pipe.

JUVENILIA

RETROSPECTIVE

AH, to-night I need your cheering,
Dearest heart that I call mine;
In my mind your face appearing
Vanishes like beads in wine.

And to-night the miles seem longer
That do keep us still apart:
Maybe 'tis love growing stronger
Makes this tempest in my heart.

All alone—of thee I'm dreaming
'Neath the rustling, moon-kissed trees;
Is it real, or is it seeming,
That your voice steals down the breeze?

Yet my spirit feels your presence
Though your face I can not see;
In the moonbeams' iridescence
See you smiling—sweet, on me.

In the gray east—dawn is breaking,
But you still are far away;
In my heart the old pains aching
As I enter the new day.

JUVENILIA

A RIME WITHOUT REASON

IN the shadowy aisles of the forest
The crimsoning leaves drift down,
As the rare and radiant jewels
Fall from a moldering crown.

And caught by the idling zephyrs,
They sail in the hazy light
Far over the hills and the valleys,
Till lost to the straining sight.

The sorrowing wind in the tree tops
Chants a requiem for the dead;
Naught else is heard but their rustle,
And the caw of a crow overhead.

And the spectral mist from the river,
Like the wraith of the summer that's dead,
Glides slowly on through the valleys,
As if sad for the golden days fled.

And my heart as I stand in the gloaming
Is full of unspeakable pain,
A wild undefinable longing
For something I never can gain.

JUVENILIA

A Rime Without Reason [CONTINUED]

Ah, I know that I never shall find it,
Though I lived till the tottering world
Is plunged headlong from its orbit,
Through the depths of eternity hurled.

But the sad-voiced wind in its moaning
A nepenthe gives to my soul,
For it too hath the same ardent yearning
That knows not respite or control.

JUVENILIA

RONDEAU

THREE FIFTY-FIVE! I would alway
That we here side by side might stay;
Alas, Love's reign seems ne'er complete;
And yet such joys must needs be fleet—
The curtain falls on Passion's play—

For see the East grows softly gray,
Voluptuous night gives place to day.
God—but the hours had winged feet!
Three fifty-five?

But what shall pass the time away
Till kindly night resumes her sway
And I beneath your window—sweet—
Shall wait, Love's old song to repeat?
• • • • •

In whispered tones I hear thee say,
Three fifty-five?

JUVENIS.

JUVENILIA

RONDEAU

THREE FIFTY-FIVE, the fire burns low.
Half dreaming in its softened glow,
My thoughts drift back to other days
That faintly gleam through golden haze
The dear dead days of long ago.

Outside the wailing wind doth blow
Wrung by some grief I can not know;
The clock shows by the moon's cold rays
Three fifty-five.

Ah, mocking thoughts that wildly flow,
Strange retrospect of joy and woe!
One specter from its grave you raise
To which my sad soul vainly prays.

.

Ah, God! that night should be so slow!
Three fifty-five?

SENEX.

JUVENILIA

NOCTURNE

WHEN shadows fall at even-tide
Sweet thoughts, that with the day must hide,
Steal softly through the idle brain—
Ah, would they might always remain
To tint with gold life's darker side.

Alas ! the hours onward glide
Too dear by far to long abide,
Sad heart, they will return again
When shadows fall.

E'en though the weary miles divide
And fears rush in—a whelming tide—
Thy mem'ry comes, a sweet refrain,
And stills the sighing chords of pain.
Once more to thee my thoughts have hied,
When shadows fall.

JUVENILIA

INSANITAS AMORIS

A DAINTY thing of patent leather,
'Tis useless quite in stormy weather,
But in her drawing-room's confines
My eyes *will* seek its graceful lines
When now and then it haps to peep
From where her skirts all jealous keep
Their treasure from unhallowed eyes—
That dear "1-B," that is the size,
And 'tis her slipper that I sing
Ten lines for just that tiny thing.

JUVENILIA

A HANDKERCHIEF

I THOUGHT it was dead though long was its dying,
The love I had prayed to and cursed all in vain,
I smiled when I saw it all motionless lying
And I said "God is good," 'twill not waken again.

But to-night in a dainty handkerchief's laces,
There lingered all faintly a subtle perfume,
The odor she loved—God how my blood races,
Its passionate rush would my hot veins consume.

In vain, still in vain, the long years of forgetting,
The peace that I prayed for has mocked me and
 flown;
All useless the nights and the days of regretting,
As futile as breath o'er a mirror once blown.

And sadly and softly the night wind is sighing,
The passionless moon to the horizon slips,
And I list to the voice of the past and its crying,
Alone with a handkerchief pressed to my lips.

JUVENILIA

“GOOD MASTER DEATH”

Good Master Death, when thou art nigh,
And life is done and I must die,
Give me no time for vain regrets:
Perhaps, the good the bad offsets,
If not there is good reason why—

’Twould please me well if you would try
In some lone place to put me by,
Where life eternal never gets—

Good Master Death.

Some place, you better know than I,
Where I could take my ease and lie
In dreamless sleep that nothing frets,
That immortality forgets;
Thou wilt not this small boon deny,

Good Master Death.

JUVENILIA

“NOW SPRING IS BEGUILING”

For lo, the winter is past.

SONG OF SOLOMON.

Now Spring is beguiling

The fancy to smiling,

With proof of her presence on hill and on plain:

The sunlight beholding

Shy buds are unfolding

And the brooks have forgotten the frost king's
reign.

The birds are all singing,

The woodland is ringing

With echoes of many a mad, merry strain:

A truce to care crying,

We banish our sighing,

For Nature has waked from her slumbers again.

His gay course pursuing,

The South wind is wooing

The flowers that long in concealment have lain:

From petals unbending

Rare fragrance ascending

Diffuses its sweetness o'er Nature's domain.

JUVENILIA

“Now Spring Is Beguiling” [CONTINUED]

Uniting and rifting
Light clouds idly drifting
Their indolent ways through the blue skies main-
tain:
And in the brooks blending
Their gay hues unending,
Reflected they dance to its rippling refrain.

Soft o'er the heart stealing
An ecstatic feeling,
A thousand desires awake in the brain:
A rare time of dreaming,
Of innocent scheming
And fanciful building of Castles in Spain.

JUVENILIA

“THOUGH CRITICS SCORN MY
HUMBLE LAYS”

THOUGH critics scorn my humble lays
On finding naught therein to praise,
And dub me upstart, tyro, fool,
And quote the child and edged tool;
I do not look to them for bays.

One ray of comfort with me stays
That all their heaped abuse repays,
And leaves me careless, calm and cool
Though critics scorn.

JUVENILIA

“IN VAIN I STRIVE”

IN vain I strive to pen to-night
A rondeau to her eyes so bright;
But ah! my verse runs all awry,
The muse is jealous, coy or shy
And all my adjectives seem trite.

Alas! I am a luckless wight
That, which they say makes labor light
Should rob me of pretext to cry

In vain I strive.

But in thine eyes a tricksy sprite
To mock my efforts takes delight
And does the needful calm deny
Which must be mine if I would try
The theme I lay down hopeless quite

In vain I strive.

JUVENILIA

'TIS HARD FOR ME TO IMPROVISE

Lo! some we loved, the loveliest and best.

RUBAIYAT.

'Tis hard for me to improvise,
In *nothing* was *I* ever wise;
But bowing to your sweet commands
My fickle muse obedient stands.

Emerson has said somewhere
That Nature, *ever* just and fair,
Is satisfied she's done her duty
With making the one gift of beauty.

So oft we find the brightest mind,
Where we least dream of it confined;
For Nature, he says, compensates—
(It seems her favors she pro-rates).

In you she must have wished to see
How well her gifts combined could be,
And sweet success has crowned her pains—
In heaven naught more perfect reigns.

JUVENILIA

“OH, WHAT AM I TO HAVE SUCH LOVE AS THINE?”

OH, what am I to have such love as thine
As freely given as the sun’s bright rays?
But far more constant, since there are no days
When in thine eyes thy pure soul doth not shine.
Oh, why does God thus cast his pearls to swine,
To lie polluted in their miry ways?
Unless perchance he vainly hopes to raise
In beasts like me some spark of the divine.
If I had ever helped thee by one word,
Or shared with thee one moment’s weight of pain,
Or laid a finger on thy cares that gird,
I could take comfort—be a man again;
But no—my selfish heart is never stirred,
And meets thy sunshine with a winter’s rain.

JUVENILIA

WILLIAM MORRIS

THE clang and tumult of these iron days
Could win no echo from his hushèd strings,
But softly sometimes came the whisperings
Of years long buried in oblivion's haze
And touched them gently as a wind that plays
'Midst summer boughs with tender murmurings.
Then clear and sweet the mellow music rings
While life turns back to old forgotten ways.

“THERE IS NO HELL”

THERE is no hell save that which each doth make
According to his wish or heart's desire.
So fear it not, that fabled place of fire.
A heart once still oh, never more will ache.
Once vice was sweet but soon or late we tire,
And then, alas! we can but sit and rake
O'er ashes cold that will no more awake.

JUVENILIA

THALASSA! THALASSA!

(The Sea! The Sea!)

THE noise and tumult of the city breaks,
Like some rude sea, against the buildings high
That hem me round, and shut out the blue sky
Which is man's birthright, although he forsakes
The gifts of Nature, and his own god makes
Of hard, bright gold, the while his youth slips by.
And then—Death comes and dims the eager eye,
And earth once more her faithless offspring takes.
I close my eyes for one brief moment's rest,
And lo! the memory of a song of yours
Hurries me off, far down the distant West,
Where dash the waves on loud-resounding shores,
And on my brows the wind's cool hands are prest,
And then once more the city round me roars.

JUVENILIA

“I HAD KNOWN HER SO LONG”

I HAD known her so long
She seemed like a sister.
Do you think it was wrong?
I had known her so long,
And temptation was strong
So I yielded and—
I had known her so long
She seemed like a sister.

JUVENILIA

“THE WIND IS MOANING ABOUT THE EAVES”

THE wind is moaning about the eaves,
The wind is chill and the night is black
For the sky is blind with the blown storm wrack,
And I dream of days that will ne'er come back.
Love, they are gone like last year's leaves.

Love, from an ultimate peak of Time,
In Youth's glad meadows, I see us stand,
While glory of Spring sweeps over the land—
Ah, Spring! it was all we could understand,
Love, shall we tremble at Winter's rime?

When your dear hands in my own I fold,
Who shall persuade me that Youth is fled?
E'en though one rose from the ranks of the dead,
Dear as of old is your beautiful head.

JUVENILIA

“REASON FROWNING ASKS OF ME”

REASON frowning asks of me,
Foolish dreamer can there be
Pleasure wherein profit lies
In the spell of women's eyes?
Can you ever hope to win
Her that you delight so in,
Think you that your love's returned—
That her soul for thine has yearned?
Seek again her lustrous eyes,
You have learned so soon to prize.
In their calm, translucent sea,
Mark you answering love for thee?

“YOU SEEM TO ME LIKE TERROR- STRICKEN FAUNS”

You seem to me like terror-stricken fauns
Snared in the city's harsh, unlovely street.
Vistas of stone alone your glances greet—
Vanished for aye the pure and choral dawns,
The morning censers swung on misty lawns,
Music of winds insufferably sweet.

JUVENILIA

“SOFTLY THE SHATTERED LANCES OF THE RAIN”

SOFTLY the shattered lances of the rain
In glistening shards fall whisp’ring on the earth,
The woods stand awed, and gone the careless mirth
Of vagrant winds whose melodies retain
Hues of the sunny lands that gave them birth.

“O LOVELY NIGHT”

O LOVELY Night, dear handmaiden of God,
Triumphant Night, Thou wast ere Time began.
Still shalt thou reign when worlds complete their
span,
When, spent, the sun reels from the path he trod,
Faints and fades out, an unremembered clod.
According to some incommunicable plan,
Man fain would fathom and its purpose scan,
Ere rings his roof to the exultant sod.

JUVENILIA

“ANIMA ANCEPS”

I OFTEN wonder if you know
How fast my throbbing pulses go,
When now and then, by happy chance,
Our eyes meet in a merry glance,
And when you laugh so sweet and low.

Ah, does your blood still calmly flow
When soft and sweet your dark eyes grow,
Or does it onward, faster dance?—

I often wonder.

Alas! Drear doubt besets me so.
Suppose my heart should tell its woe:
Would you then coldly look askance,
Or with the eyes that so entrance
A light on all my darkness throw?—

I often wonder.

JUVENILIA

O BLESSED SLEEP

O BLESSED sleep that vanquishes mine eyes
When all the world in lang'rous revery lies.
A jealous mistress thou; who would adore
Must love thee only, giving all else o'er,
Lest from afar thou wilt but tantalize.

With thy cool touch what splendid visions rise,
What gentle play of unheard melodies
Where noiseless waves wash on a phantom
shore,
O blessed sleep !

The heart no more for empty nothings cries;
Life is forgot, naught know we of its sighs.
Alas, that day should consciousness restore,
That thou art deaf to piteous implore:
Too soon always thy weird witchery flies,
O blessed sleep !

JUVENILIA

“IN THE FOREST ALL IS SILENT”

IN the forest all is silent
Save the leaves' uncertain rustling;
Gaunt and grim the gloomy arches,
And the chill wind moaning through them
Drives the withered leaves before it,
Pallid ghosts of a dead summer
Flitting through a ruined temple;
And the moonbeams struggle faintly
Through the clouds all gray and shapeless,
On the branches restless swaying,
Swaying impotent and helpless,
Clutching with their knotty fingers
At the cold gray sky above them,
As an old man worn and feeble
Muttering low in accents broken
Wanders with his eyes uplifted
Seeking vainly some lost treasure.
Darkness—Death—Desolation.

JUVENILIA

RONDEL

TAKE not thy lips away, O love of mine,
For naught is there in life one half so sweet
That whelms the sense with rhapsody divine,
Mocking all speech when I would fain repeat
The tale thou knowest. Would my heart might
beat

Forever with thine own, my eyes meet thine.
Take not thy lips away, O love of mine.

Take not thy lips away, O love of mine,
For naught is there in life one half so sweet.
It is the pearl dissolved in life's rough wine
That doth allure e'en with its mute entreat,
And Time stays not his ever flying feet
Nor will the sun for us forever shine,—
Take not thy lips away, O love of mine.

JUVENILIA

EN PASSANT

RONDEL—AFTER DOBSON

SOFTLY to-night is mem'ry turning
The dim old leaves of her book of lore,
And days forgotten rise up once more,
Old days that were fraught with a useless
yearning.

Again in my heart I feel its burning,
The old sweet love of the days of yore.
Softly to-night is mem'ry turning
The dim old leaves of her book of lore.

Ah, well!—once more thy dust inurning,
Again to oblivion I give thee o'er,
Less the foolish prayers that I said before:
Time gives to us all a little learning.
Softly to-night is mem'ry turning.

JUVENILIA

“O LOVE, COME BACK”

O Love, come back, I fain would say,
Though crabbed Wisdom whispers “Nay,
Thou knowest well the sighs and pain
That shall be thine if Love remain.
Rejoice that Love is well away.”

’Tis true I swore but yesterday
That Love should lead no more astray,
And yet my heart cries out again,
 O Love, come back!

Leave me no more, but with me stay,
Then all the year shall be as May.
Live in my heart and in it reign
And lift me pleasure’s cup to drain;
Though life should only be a day,
 O Love, come back!

NOTES

NOTES

STEPHEN PHILLIPS, BANKRUPT.

Suggested by a notice in a London paper that Stephen Phillips, the English poet, had been declared a bankrupt.

THE DUKE OF GANDIA.

The Duke of Gandia is one of the later dramatic poems of Charles Algernon Swinburne.

DEATH OF ASE (PEER GYNT SUITE).

Ibsen's poetic drama, *Peer Gynt*, Act 3, Sc. 4.

BY THE SEA: A MEMORY.

Written for Mrs. David Van Alstyne's bungalow at Leonardo, New Jersey.

“SLAVE” OF MICHELANGELO.

The famous piece of sculpture, “The Slave,” in the Louvre at Paris.

“VICTORY” OF SAMOTHRACE.

The statue in the Louvre, discovered in 1863 during excavations on the Island of Samothrace, Ægean Sea. The quotation in the first line is from Stephen Crane, the American novelist.

NOTES

IN MEMORIAM: TO GREAYER CLOVER.

In memory of Greayer Clover, a young aviator who fell to his death, August 30, 1918.

THE BELOVED VAGABOND.

Addressed to an old friend, Young Ewing Allison, of Louisville, Ky.

COUSIN JANE.

Addressed to Miss Jane Rutherford, of Richmond, Va.

MONTVILLE.

The deserted home of the Ayletts. Philip Aylett, who was the great grandfather of the poet, married the daughter of Patrick Henry.

FRIENDSHIP'S OFFERING.

To Ruth Sharpe Metcalf.

TO A POLYPHONIC POET.

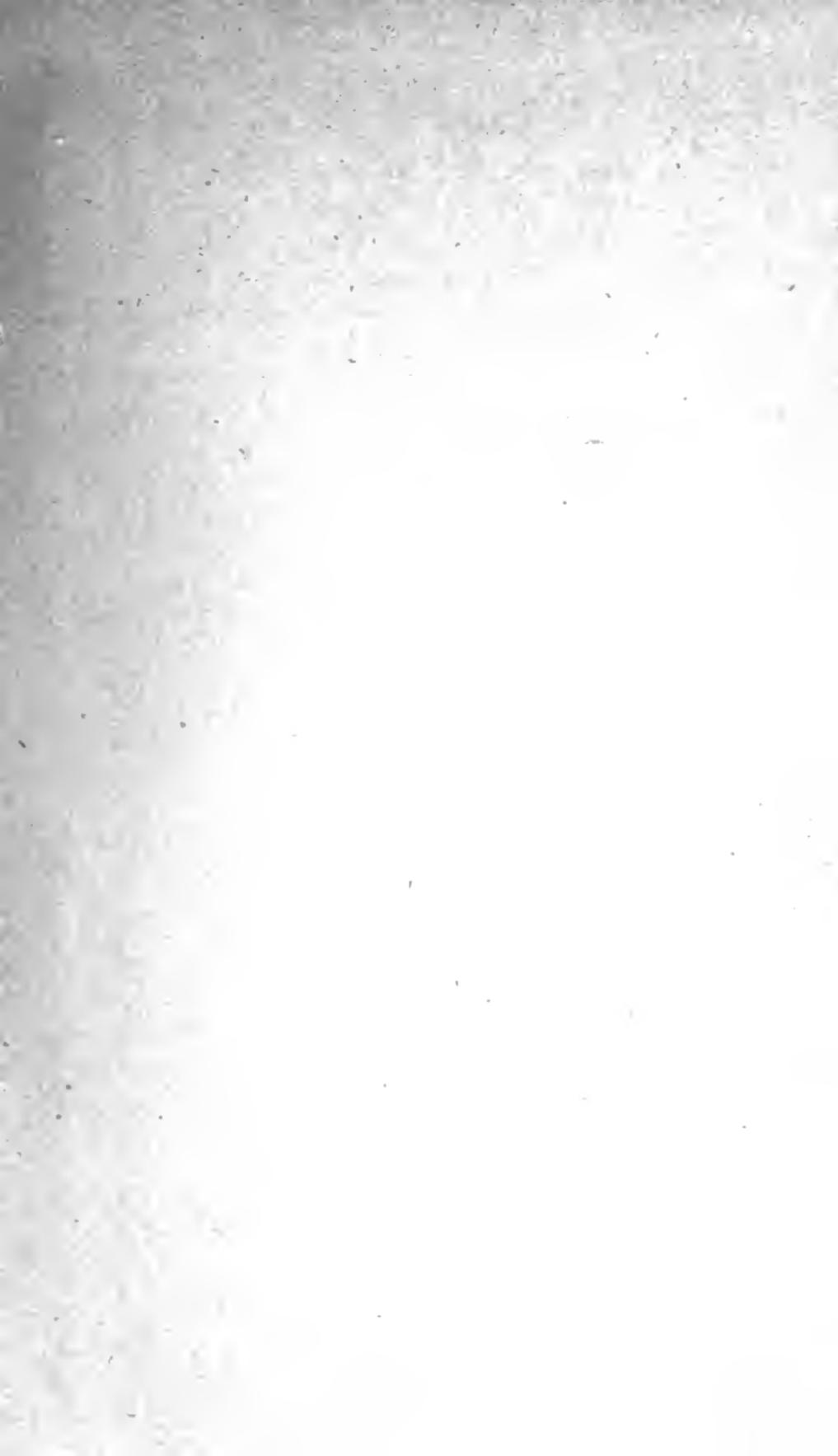
After reading *Can Grande's Castle*, by Miss Amy Lowell.

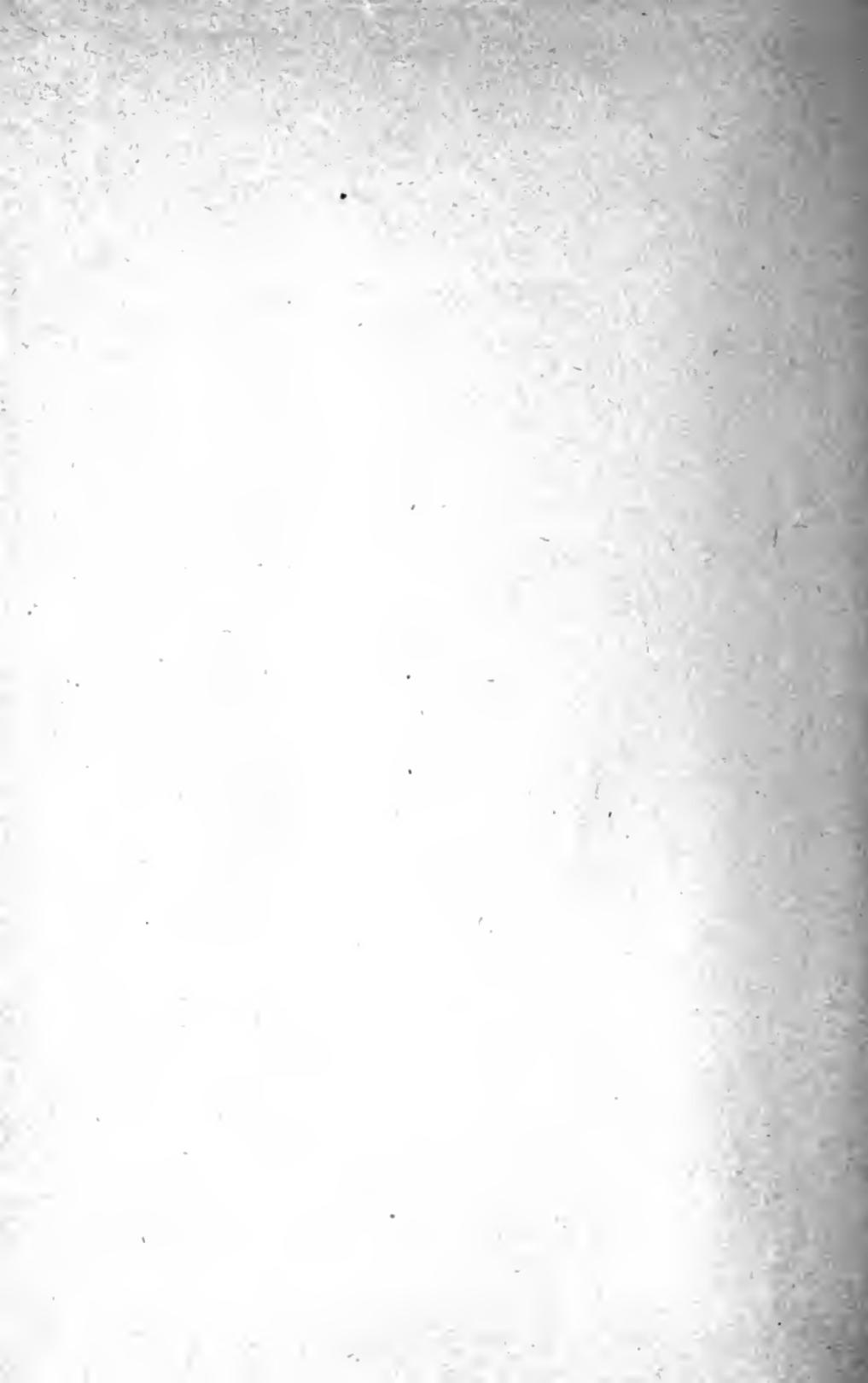
COVERLY.

The country home of Mrs. Archer Jones, in Amelia County, Virginia.

THALASSA! THALASSA!

The title of this poem may have been suggested by the exclamation of the Greek army, as recorded in Xenophon's *Anabasis*, when, after a perilous march, they caught sight of the sea.





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